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ABSTRACT

Participants in this resource sharing conference in Alaska, which focused on the identification of educational resources and linking users to resource providers, included representatives from business, industry, and other agencies, as well as educators. The objectives of the conference were (1) to provide providers of services with a better insight into local educational personnel and program needs: (2) to provide providers of services with a better understanding of selected linking systems which make their services more accessible to local school personnel: (3) to provide linking agents with a better understanding of the needs of both local personnel and providers of services, with the intent of increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the linking services: and (4) to provide a forum for better understanding among members of each of these three basic groups. The report includes a summary of presentations and activities, the conference agenda, a list of participants, conference evaluation data, and definitions of groups comprising the helper/helpee relationship in education. (RAA)

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ALASKA STATE DISSEMINATION CONFERENCE

"Linking Instructional Resources"

Anchorage Westward Hilton
Anchorage, Alaska
February 5-6, 1980

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In cooperation with
Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

An Action Report

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
DISSEMINATION PROGRAM
710 S.W. Second Avenue
Portland, OR 97204

February 1980

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Introduction

The Alaska Dissemination Conference was a part of a continuing effort by the Alaska Department of Education (DOE) to further school improvement in the state. Personnel at the Department have long recognized that improvements in resource identification and increases in communication will lead to a greater utilization and improved schools. Their pioneering work with the Alaska Knowledge Base, telecommunications system and electronic mail system attest to this long-range vision.

DOE staff also realize that personnel from business, industry and other agencies, whose primary focus is not education, but who can and do provide various types of resources for the educational community, need to work as equal partners with educators. The conference theme, 'Linking Instructional Resources," and the organizations and agencies invited reflect the collaborative philosophy of the Department's leadership. Several key agencies and organizations from the state were represented. (See Attachments A and B)

Background

Before reporting the conference activities, it seems appropriate to provide background information so that the Alaskan conference can be seen in both a state and a regional context.

The Alaska Department of Education, recognizing the value of inter-agency collaboration and sharing, particularly in an era of scarce resources, has worked closely with Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory's Dissemination Program to create a system for resource exchange in the state

and the region. As part of this effort, Department of Education staff agreed to join with the Dissemination Program and the other states in the region in what has come to be called the Northwest Regional Dissemination Configuration project.[1]

Supported by the National Institute of Education (NIE), the Configuration Project has made possible a resource sharing conference in each of the states. It has also provided support for the development of notebooks which describe educational resource and service groups in each state. Alaska's conference and forthcoming resource notebook, therefore, have a dual purpose: While the conference and the notebook are organized around the particular concerns of Alaska educators, they are also intended to support the eventual development of a regional resource sharing network.

Department of Education staff selected an appropriate core group to bring together for purposes of expanding the resource exchange effort and invited them to attend the conference. A pre-conference mailing announced the conference goal as being to increase individual and group knowledge of the resources and services available from the organizations represented. This mailing also provided each recipient with a blank form for developing an abstract of his or her organization and a set of guidelines to assist participants in this task. A portion of the conference agenda was devoted to sharing the information on the abstracts, along with participant presentations on the services and resources of their organizations. Participants also worked on completing additional abstracts and revising those currently in the Alaska Knowledge Base.

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[1] Together, the states of Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington comprise the Northwest Regional Exchange, coordinated by the NWREL Dissemination Program. The Configuration is a special project of the Exchange.

Conference Activities

Marilou Madden, who was formerly Director of the Division of Educational Program Support and is now Director of the Division of Management, Law and Finance, welcomed participants and briefly described the background of the conference. The major portion of her address expanded the theme of the conference, and she encouraged participants to make use of this opportunity to "...get a better feel of how schools go about curriculum planning." She observed that one very important component of curriculum planning and implementation is the identification of resources appropriate to the program being studied. Madden further reminded the participants that educators are frequently not aware of many resources available from business, industry and other agencies which could provide alternative teaching/learning modalities. She spoke of the potential of resource collaboration and expressed the hope that the conference participants would interact and provide ideas for the development of improved communication and resource linkages.

Marv Harmon of the NWREL Dissemination Program, substituting for Ron Daugherty, President of the Northern Institute for Research, Training and Development, Inc., spoke of four basic groups involved in the helper/helpee relationship in education: the student, the school personnel, the linking agent and the provider. He described these groups and outlined the particular situation, problems and challenges facing each (Attachment D). He pointed out that while three of these groups--school personnel, linking agents and providers--were represented at the conference, the majority of those in attendance were providers.

With a brief discussion of these groups as background, Harmon went on to review the objectives of the conference:

- To provide providers of services with a better insight as to local education personnel and program needs

- To provide providers of services with a better understanding of selected linking systems which make their services more accessible to local school personnel
- To provide linking agents with a better understanding of the needs of both local personnel and of providers of services with the intent of increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the linking services
- To provide a forum for a better understanding among members of each of these three basic groups

He summarized by saying that the extent to which these objectives are attained is highly dependent upon the open and honest exchange of views and ideas between presenters and participants and among participants.

Marilou Madden then introduced Robert Van Slyke, the superintendent of Southwest School District, who spoke on the topic, "Why We Need Each Other: A View of Where 'We' Are, Where 'We' Need to Go and How 'We' Might Get There." He reminded the participants of their common educational heritage, citing such past influences on the conduct of education as curriculum guides and the insistence that teachers were to be on a certain page at a certain date; the impact of Sputnik and the resulting emphasis on science, math and foreign language; the cry for relevance in the late sixties and the later demand for accountability.

Van Slyke then spoke of changes unique to Alaska. Among these were:

- The transition from Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) boarding schools to regional high schools
- The transfer of BIA day schools to the state and to the local districts
- The passage of Senate Bill 35 and the establishment of Regional Education Attendance Areas (REAAs)
- The consent decree arising out of Tobeluk vs. Lind and the resulting establishment of secondary programs throughout bush Alaska

He recalled the period when these changes were taking place and the tendency to discard the old before what was to replace it had been developed.

Van Slyke spoke of his district's commitment to long-range planning and explained the process which has worked for that district. He described the current situation in the Southwest School District, outlined its goals and shared ideas on how these goals might be achieved. He cited assistance in alternative instructional strategies as a current need experienced by the district.

Dr. Lawrence Fish, Executive Director of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, was introduced and shared his perspective on the importance of dissemination networking in supporting educational goals. He emphasized the synergistic effects of sharing knowledge and resources and gave indications of several kinds of activities which can bring about a high-functioning network.

Drawing an analogy between educational offerings and the culinary and social offerings of a banquet, Fish underscored the importance of providing students with a varied "educational meal," carefully prepared and served. In addition, he emphasized that striving to bring about educational improvement does not imply that present circumstances are bad, but is rather a natural and necessary process engaged in by creative, idealistic educators. Fish went on to point out that networking needs to be conducted with an eye to what an individual or an institution needs, as well as what the person or group has to give and share. Underscoring, once again, the power inherent in building and utilizing dissemination networks to effect educational improvement, Fish concluded his presentation by commending the participants on their networking efforts and expressing his appreciation for being invited to the conference.

The agenda was modified at this point, and a slide-tape program on the Alaska Telecommunications system was presented by Ed Obie of the

Alaska Department of Education. Following the presentation participants took full advantage of the opportunity to ask questions about the current system and its potential future applications.

Dennis Demmert, Special Assistant to the President, University of Alaska, summarized the morning session and recounted highlights from the various presentations.

The afternoon began with the participants moving among three sectionals. Sheila Furer from the Alaska State Library chaired a group who responded to the topic, "What We Need From the Alaska Knowledge Base in the Future." Darby Anderson of the Alaska Department of Education facilitated the section devoted to the Alaska Knowledge Base. Dave Campbell and Marv Harmon of NWREL coordinated "Mapping Your Organization." These sections provided participants with an opportunity to interact with the group leaders and with one another to learn more about resource identification and utilization.

The afternoon concluded with the videotape, "Nearly Everything You Wanted to Know About Dissemination But Were too Befuddled to Ask."[2]

The second day began with Dean Otteson, Vice Principal, Kenai Central High School, presenting slides and commentary on an Experience-Based Career Education (EBCE) program in Kodiak. Following the presentation participants offered many questions and comments, and the discussion continued into the break which followed.

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[2]Originally produced by the Department of Special Education, University of New Mexico, for the 1978 National Dissemination Forum, this 3/4" color videotape is available on loan from NWREL. Written requests are preferred. Write to: Virginia Thompson, Director, Dissemination Program, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 710 S. W. Second Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97204.

"Improving the Link Between User and Provider" was the topic of the presentation given by Dave Forbes, Instructor, Kenai Community College. His humorous look at educational organizations and the outcomes of their activities led to a serious, thought-provoking discussion. One of Forbes' major themes was that people must work with educators so that the educational process will become collaborative rather than bureaucratic.

In order to provide more time for participants to interact, reflect and provide guidelines to the Department, it was decided that small group discussions would replace the panel discussion cited in the conference agenda. Each group had a facilitator and recorder and were asked to respond to:

- What are some implications this conference has surfaced for your agency/business?
- What are some recommendations you wish to make?
- What are some questions which this conference has kindled?

The discussion was lively in each group and the reporting out from groups tended to create further discussion. Participants generally agreed that they needed to convince their own agencies to:

- Look more closely at the population to be served
- Provide assistance to teachers as needed so that a program/product can be better used
- Work with the DOE to enlarge the Alaska Knowledge Base
- Attend more education conferences
- Make better use of the Regional Resource Centers (RRCs)

They recommended that:

- The DOE provide providers with information and not wait to be asked
- The DOE consider other ways to package the Alaska Talent Bank expertise

- Teachers and providers to meet early and frequently
- The Talent Bank be expanded

Formal and informal evaluation indicated that the conference met the needs of the participants (Attachment C), and there was strong indication that a conference of this sort needed to be held again and possibly expanded. Some discussion was devoted to the form that subsequent conferences organized around dissemination and resource exchange might take in support of furthering educational improvement in Alaska.

ATTACHMENTS

A Conference Agenda

B Participant List

C Evaluation Summary

D Groups Involved in the Helper/Helpee Relationship in Education

ATTACHMENT A

CONFERENCE AGENDA
"Linking Instructional Resources"
Aleutian Room - Anchorage Westward Hilton
February 5-6, 1980

MORNING - February 5

9:00 a.m.

1. Welcome and Acknowledgements	Thelma Langdon, President State Board of Education
1.1 Who Are We	
1.2 The Charge - Expectations and Agenda	Marilou Madden Alaska State Department of Education Ron Daugherty, Director The Northern Institute
2. Why We Need Each Other	Bob Van Slyke, Superintendent Southwest Region Schools
2.1 An Overview of a District's Long-Range Planning	
2.2 A View of Where "We" Are, Where We Need To Go and How We Might Get There	
3. How Can People Gain Access	Larry Fish, Director Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
4. Summary of the Morning	Dennis Demmert Special Asst. to the President University of Alaska

AFTERNOON

5. Sectionals	
5.1 Alaska Telecommunications System	Ed Obie Department of Education
5.2 Alaska Knowledge Base/Information Resources	Darby Anderson Department of Education Sheila Furer State Library
5.3 Mapping Your Organization	Dave Campbell Marv Harmon Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
6. What We Need From the Alaska Knowledge Base and Resource Agencies in the Future	John Peper, Superintendent Anchorage School District
7. Group Recommendations	Small Group Leaders

MORNING - February 6

9:00 a.m.

8.	Sectionals	
	8.1 How External Resources Are Used in an LEA	Dean Otteson, Vice Principal Kenai Central High School
	8.2 Improving the Link Between User and Provider	Dave Forbes, Instructor Kenai Community College
9.	Challenges We Face in Meeting Your Needs in the Future	Panel: Darby Anderson Virginia Thompson, Director Dissemination Program Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
10.	Synthesizing the Conference	Marilou Madden

11:30 a.m.

11. Adjourn

ATTACHMENT B

ALASKA STATE CONFERENCE
February 5-6, 1980

List of Participants

Jean Ann Alter	National Education Association, Anchorage, AK
Darby Anderson	Department of Education, Juneau, AK
Ray Bailey	WAMI Medical Education Program, Univ. Alaska, Fairbanks, AK
Nancy Bill	Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corp., Bethel, AK
Rio Ritha Brown	Alaska Native Commission on Alcoholism/Drug Abuse, Anchorage, AK
Robert T. Brown	Bristol Bay Regional Resource Center, Dillingham, AK
David Campbell	Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Portland, OR
Diane Crowne	Arctic Environmental Information and Data Center, Anchorage, AK
Ron Daugherty	The Northern Institute, Anchorage, AK
Dennis Demmert	Univ. Alaska, Fairbanks, AK
Marti Early	Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation, Juneau, AK
Debra J. Eisen	American Cancer Society, Anchorage, AK
Larry Fish	Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Portland, OR
Dave Forbes	Kenai Community College, Kenai, AK
Sheila Furer	Alaska State Library, Anchorage, AK
Jean Graves	Alaska Yukon Library Consultant, Anchorage, AK
Mark L. Hanson	South East Regional Resource Center, Juneau, AK
Marv Harmon	Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Portland, OR
Richard Hazen	Western Regional Resource Center, Anchorage, AK
Leo C. Kaye	Alaska Lung Association, Anchorage, AK
Thelma Langdon	State Board of Education, Anchorage, AK
Marilou Madden	Alaska Department of Education, Juneau, AK
Brenda Melteff	Alaska Sea Grant Program, Univ. Alaska, Fairbanks, AK

Alaska State Conference
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Carla Michalove	Arts Alaska, Inc., Anchorage, AK
Frederich A. Milan	Institute of Arctic Biology, Univ. Alaska, Fairbanks, AK
Stetson Momosor	Arctic Environmental Information and Data Center, Anchorage, AK
Ed Obie	Department of Education, Juneau, AK
Myrna Orme	Head Start, RURAL CAP, Anchorage, AK
Dean Otteson	Kenai Central High School, Kenai, AK
LuAnne Packer	South East Regional Resource Center, Juneau, AK
John Peper	Anchorage School District, Anchorage, AK
Francis J. Phillips	Consultant, Phillips Associates, Anchorage, AK
Kevin Ray	American Red Cross, Anchorage, AK
Virginia Thompson	Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Portland, OR
Bob Van Slyke	Southwest Region Schools, Dillingham, AK
Sandra Vannice	Corps of Engineers, Anchorage, AK
Maurice Ward	Univ. Alaska, Fairbanks, AK
Wendy Wolf	Alaska Division of Parks, Anchorage, AK

ATTACHMENT C

Alaska Conference
"Linking Instructional Resources"
February 5-6, 1980

Evaluation Form[1]

1. As a result of attending this conference, I have increased my awareness of the resources available to me in Alaska.

   17 Yes 2 No *No response - 2*

2. As a result of attending this conference, I will be able to access available resources more efficiently.

   16 Yes 3 No *No response - 1*

3. As a participant I was able to influence future planning in regard to:

   7 Yes 3 No (a) development of resources *"Hope to" - 3*

   9 Yes 1 No (b) design of delivery systems *"Possibly" - 3*

   9 Yes 1 No (c) availability and use of human resources *"Hope to" - 4; "Possibly" - 3*

4. As a result of this conference I have increased the number of personal contacts which I might utilize to meet future needs.

   18 Yes 1 No *No response - 1*

5. My overall evaluation of this conference is that it was:

   (a)[2] 16 useful 0 not useful

   (b)[3] 14 productive 0 not productive

   (c)[4] 7 well organized 1 poorly organized

   (d)[5] 9 stimulating 0 dull

   (e)[6] 6 matched expectations 1 missed

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[1] *Twenty respondents returned these forms.*

[2] *"Useful on some parts" - 1; marked between "useful" and "not useful" - 1; "no on some parts" - 1; no response - 1*

[3] *Marked between "productive" and "not productive" - 1; no response - 5*

[4] *Marked between "well organized" and "poorly organized" - 5; no response - 7*

[5] *Marked between "stimulating" and "dull" - 6; "stimulating in parts" - 1; "dull in parts" - 1; no response - 5*

[6] *Marked between "matched" and "missed" - 5; no response - 8*

GROUPS COMPRISING THE HELPER/HELPEE RELATIONSHIP IN EDUCATION

The Student...

A fragile thing called a human being

Spends 12 years--180 six-hour days per year in the school

A person faced with learning in the same period of time you and I had, the necessary skills to survive, but in a world where there is at least twice as much knowledge to process and many more complex social issues before being declared an adult

The School Personnel...

A teacher overrun with innovation, rules, policies and, in many cases, inadequate facilities and materials

A principal whose job has been warped due to recordkeeping and report preparation for everything under the sun

A specialist/coordinator trying to help the local school personnel and trying to make those same personnel happy

A superintendent caught up in labor disputes, court cases and occupied trying to answer the public's questions relating to why schools are not solving all of society's ills and still teaching the basics

The Linking Agent...

The person or system that attempts to help local school people find what they need, where they want it and when it is needed, while also attempting to assist those providing the help to do a better job of meeting the local school personnel needs

The Provider...

The person or agency ready and able to help the local school personnel--sometimes whether they want the help or not, whether the help meets the students' needs or not, and sometimes in a form not helpful to local personnel

Helper/helpee relationships need to be conducted with an awareness of the characteristics, strengths, needs and problems of each participating group.